29. Water-rights.—Members of this Assembly are possibly aware that there has been a long-standing dispute between the Government of Travancore and the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company, Ltd. The points in dispute were in respect of the Government's water-rights within the Concession area with particular reference to their right to levy royalty on water-power generated and utilised by the Company. This question had formed the subject of contention for a period of over twenty years. Occasion arose for me to take up the question; and at a conference held in Trivandrum between the General Manager of the Company and his staff on the one side and myself and my advisers on the other, sufficient common ground was reached to raise hopes of settlement without recourse to arbitration. Negotiations were further pursued at conferences when I went up to Munnar in February 1926. There were a few outstanding points of difference which it has taken the intervening months to compose and now we have at last reached finality. The agreements have been drafted and I hope the indentures will very shortly be signed. The salient points of the settlement are that the Company recognises, without qualification, Travancore's general rights over water within the Concession area. As a direct consequence it has agreed to pay royalty to the State on every unit of water-power used. The Company has also withdrawn its claim to the exclusive right of generating power from the stream at Pallivasal. This arrangement will enable the Government to establish their own hydro-electric station at Pallivasal, if and when the need arises. For our part, we have allowed the Company a concession on the royalty leviable, namely, a rebate of 50 per cent. of the royalty for the first 50 years and thereafter a rebate of 25 per cent. of the royalty, subject to a minimum payment to the Government of Rs. 5 per unit of power. This general rate will apply also to the particular case of the Company's power station at Pallivasal, with these further advantages accruing to the Government that the concessional rate will only be for 28 years and will always be subject to a minimum payment to the Government of Rs. 5,000 a year. In announcing this entirely satisfactory settlement, Her Highness's Government desire to express their appreciation of the friendly attitude and the complete reasonableness which the General Manager of the Company, Mr. H. L. Pinches, contributed to the negotiations.

30. Co-operative Societies.—The co-operative movement continued to spread; but practically in one direction only, namely, that of co-operative credit societies. The last year showed an increase of 323 societies, and at the end of Vrischikam this year there was a further addition of 35 societies. The rule regarding the assignment of land to co-operative societies for depressed classes was amended so as to make such assignments easier.

31. Joint Stock Companies.—The State-Aided Bank has issued shares for Rs. 20 lakhs to the public; and of this, nearly Rs. 15 lakhs were taken up within the prescribed period. The Bank is expected to commence business shortly. The paid-up capital at the end of 1101 of the Joint Stock Companies incorporated in the State was Rs. 85 lakhs.

32. Public Health.—The constitution of the Administrative Board, Medical Services, has rendered frequent inspections possible. A second batch of 14 pupils is being trained in nursing in the Women and Children's Hospital and another 14 pupils are undergoing a course of training for two years in midwifery at Quilon; and the intention is to train them for midwifery and health and welfare work in rural areas. The dispensary treatment of leprosy and the provision for anti-rabic treatment have been largely availed of. Two new Government dispensaries and one grant-in-aid dispensary were opened during 1101. Arrangements are in progress for an up-to-date X-ray installation and electric lighting in the General Hospital and for opening a special department of electro-therapeutics. Proposals for the constitution of a separate Women's Medical Service are under consideration. Two Government dispensaries have been opened during the current year. In the General Hospital, two new blocks to accommodate 48 patients have been completed and they are being furnished; a semi-permanent shed with eight beds has also been constructed for housing poor persons suffering from rabies. Additional accommodation has been provided in the hospitals at Nagercoil, Quilon, Kottayam, Alleppey and Arukutti

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

and in the Ophthalmic Hospital, Trivandrum. In accordance with the sanctioned programme, ten new *vaidyasalas* were opened in 1101. The publication of ancient manuscripts on Ayurveda was commenced.

33. Rural Sanitation.—The proposal of the Sanitary Commissioner to make vaccination compulsory in non-municipal areas is engaging the attention of the Government. With a view to improving the sanitary condition of rural areas, 16 new conservancy stations were opened from the beginning of the current year. A revised scheme for the sinking of wells in rural areas, under which the Sanitary Department is to be invested with the necessary funds, is under examination. In the case of wells for Sambavar villages, the Government have undertaken to bear the whole expenditure where the people are too poor to pay any contribution.

34. Education.—The total number of recognised educational institutions under the control of the Education Department at the end of 1101 was 3,509 and the strength in them, 4,80,986, denoting an increase of fifty institutions and nearly ten thousand pupils. Except one *pakuthi* in the Peermade taluk and seven *pakuthies* in the thinly populated Devicolam taluk, each *pakuthi* has at least one recognised school. There were, besides, 18 instructional institutions under other departments, with a total strength of 1,359. Including the expenditure on *quasi*-educational institutions and the outlay on educational buildings, the aggregate gross expenditure from general revenues on education was Rs. 40,39,328 which forms 22·08 per cent. of the total expenditure of the State and works out at Re. -1-0-4 per head of the population. In pursuance of a resolution moved in the Legislative Council, the Government appointed a mixed committee of officials and non-officials to consider the question of revising the pay of vernacular school teachers. The committee is at work. The new College Hostel was opened during the current year and admission to it is allowed to all students irrespective of caste or creed. As a further concession to pupils belonging to the depressed classes, poor and deserving pupils from those communities are, experimentally for a period of five years, being exempted from the payment of examination fees. Application has been made to the University of Madras for the affiliation of the Women's College in Branches V and VI of the B. A. course and in Group II (Natural Science) in the Intermediate course. This will relieve to some extent the congestion in the Arts and the Science colleges by the withdrawal to an institution of their own, where better facilities for games and social life are available, of the large number of girls now in those institutions. The provision of noonday meals to the poor pupils attending schools situated at a distance from their homes is engaging the attention of the Government; and they feel that in a matter like this they will not appeal in vain to the generosity of the public to whom an excellent example has been set by Mr. T. Padmanabha Rao who has endowed property of over Rs. 30,000 for the grant of noonday meals in the Sri Mula Vilasam High School, Trivandrum.

35. Unemployment.—At the April meeting of the Legislative Council a resolution was moved recommending, in view of the increase in the number of the unemployed in the State, the appointment of a committee to enquire into and report on measures to remedy the evil. The Government accepted the resolution and have accordingly appointed a committee, with a majority of non-officials elected by the Council. The committee has begun work and has circulated a questionnaire.

36. Devolution of Authority.—The proposals made by the special officer for the devolution of administrative powers have been examined by the Government and orders enhancing the powers of appointment, transfer, etc., have already been issued in respect of 16 departments. The question of similar devolution in other departments is under the consideration of the Government.

37. Conclusion.—Now I come to what is to me the pleasantest part of my Address. I make public acknowledgment of my deep obligation to Her Highness the Maharani Regent. If, beset by many trials and burdened with many anxieties, I have been able to carry on the administration justly and dutifully, and in some measure to your satisfaction, it is to Her Highness that I owe it all. The millions of her subjects little know how much they owe to her unerring judgment and her calm courage. Nothing can go wrong with the administration of this country, nothing can be done to the detriment of its peoples, while such a Great Heart, such a Serene Soul, guides its destinies. Let our thank-offering to Her Highness be unmeasured loyalty, unshaken trustfulness, abiding gratitude.

The Assembly adjourned at 12-45 P. M. to meet again at 11-30 A. M. on Tuesday, the 22nd February, 1927.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly